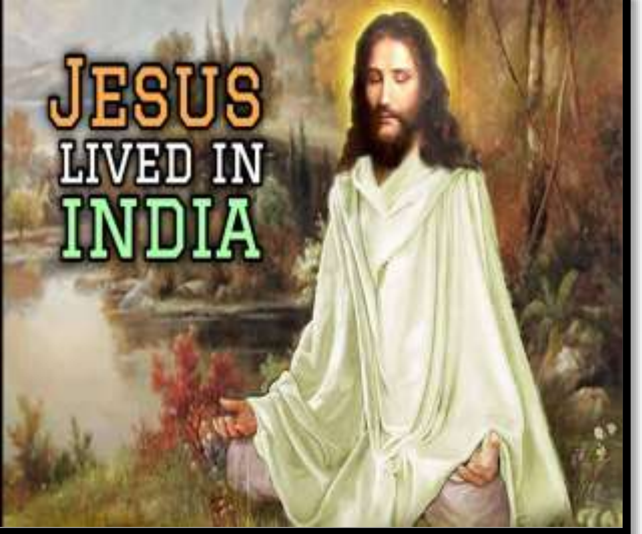
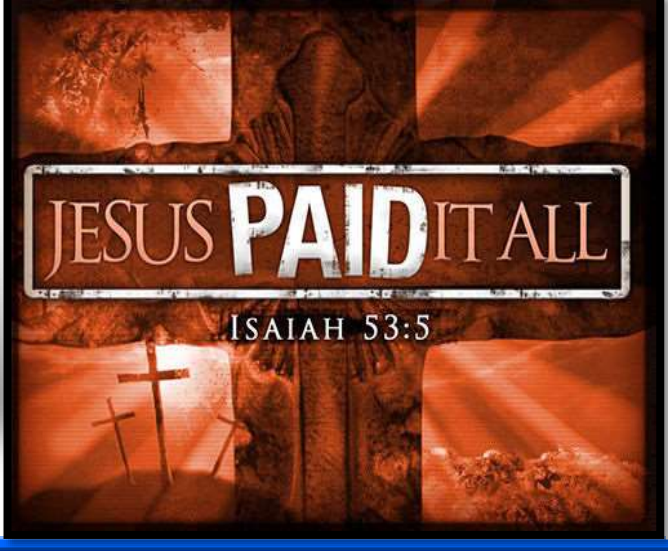




The Rise of Christianity

Go and make Disciples of all Nations…

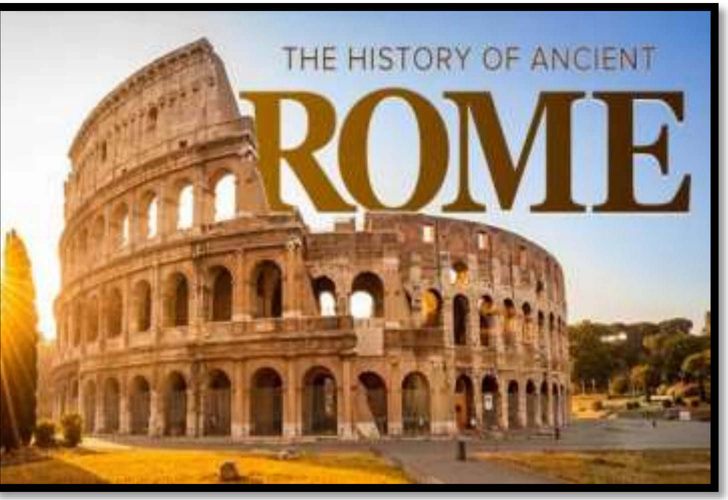
Presented by

Rev. D. David

Lesson: 03

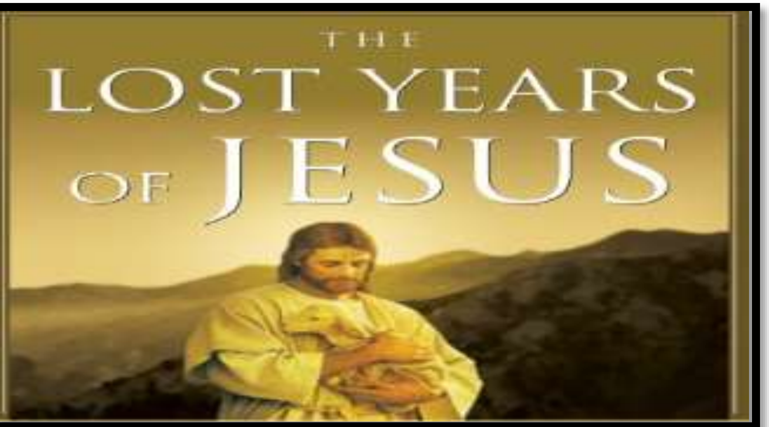
Part: Two

Emperor Augustus (BC27-14 AD)



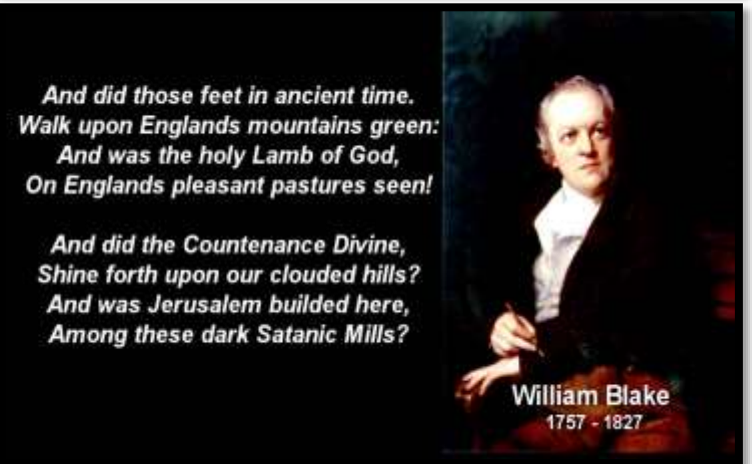
- **Emperor Augustus**: The Roman Emperor Augustus dramatically enlarged the Empire, annexing Egypt, Dalmatia (Albenia), Pannonia (Bosnia), Noricum (Hungary), and Raetia (Austria), expanding possessions in Africa, and Hispania (Caribbean Island).
- **Reforms**: Augustus reformed the Roman system of taxation, developed networks of roads with an official courier system, established a standing army, Praetorian Guard, created official police and fire-fighting services for Rome, and rebuilt much of the city during his reign.
- **Civil War**: Herod Archelaus ruled Judea so badly that he was dismissed in 6 CE by Augustus, after an appeal from his own population. He turned the kingdom of Judea into a Roman province and the Roman procurator was given authority to punish by execution. After 6AD, Jewish religious leaders were appointed by the Romans
- **Julio-Claudian Dynasty**: Augustus reigned as emperor for 45 years and died on 19 August AD 14 at the age of 75. The Roman Senate declared Augustus as God. Augustus's famous last words were, "Have I played the part well? Then applaud as I exit"—referring to the play-acting and regal authority that he had put on as emperor. Publicly, though, his last words were, "Behold, I found Rome of clay, and leave her to you of marble.". With his two grandsons already dead, power passed to his stepson, Tiberius.

The Life of Jesus



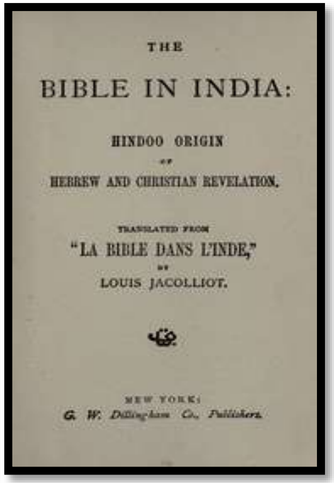
- **Childhood**: Shortly after His birth, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem (Luke 2:22-38). Within months, the family would journey by night to Egypt to escape the murderous rampage of King Herod (Matthew 2:13-18). In Egypt, the family found safe haven until Herod's death, when the family returned home (Mat 2:19-23). When Jesus was 12-year-old, he had accompanied his parents on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and became separated. He was found several days later in a temple, discussing affairs with some of Jerusalem's elders Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men (Lk 2:41-52).
- **Family of Jesus**: Joseph and Mary did not have children before Jesus' birth (Matthew 1:24-25). However, the Bible tells us, Jesus had 4 brothers and at least 2 sisters from his step father Joseph (Mat 13:55,56). The Bible has no references to Jesus' Adolescent.
- **Unknown years of Jesus**: While his birth, childhood, later years and death are all well documented in the gospels of the New Testament, a question mark continues to hang over how Jesus spent his time between the ages of 12 and 30. It's one of the greatest mysteries in history. The unknown years of Jesus also called his silent years, lost years, or missing years. Where was he in the interim? This gaping hole in Jesus' life has led to fantastic theories and stories.

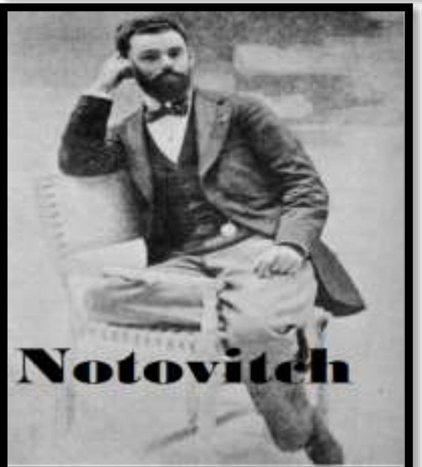
Unknown Years of Jesus

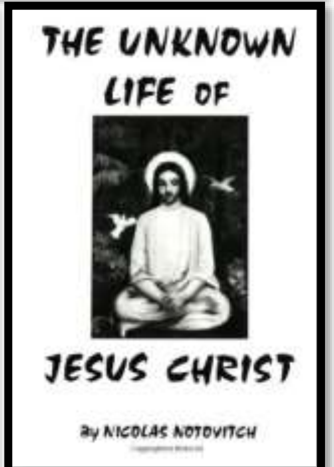


- **1).Theories**: In the late medieval period, there appeared Arthurian legends that the young Jesus had been in Britain. In the 19th and 20th centuries theories began to emerge. Let us see some of the theories.
- **2).Carpenter**: The mainstream explanation for the lost years of Jesus is pretty straightforward. Jesus spent his youth in Nazareth studying to be a carpenter with his father, Joseph, and indeed grew up to be a carpenter (Mk 6:3). This theory is the most straightforward, since sons generally practiced the same trade as their fathers. But Jesus himself is not described as a carpenter anywhere in the Gospels.
- **3).Britain**: The story of Jesus visiting Britain as a boy is based on legends connected with Joseph of Arimathea a tin trader. This idea was expressed by a French poet of 13th century Robert de Boron's Joseph d' Arimathie, in which Jesus travelled some 2,000 years ago as part of his quest for sacred knowledge to talk to the Druids in Glastonbury, the idea being that Druidism religion held some similarities to the Christian faith. It was popularized by the English poet William Blake (1757–1827) in his poem “And did those feet in ancient time, Walk upon England's mountains green? And was the Holy Lamb of God, On England's pleasant pastures seen?” which forms the lyrics of popular hymn "Jerusalem".

Unknown Years of Jesus



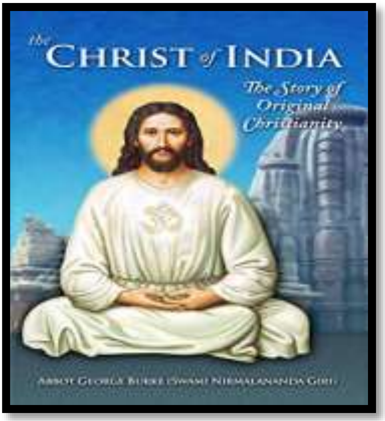


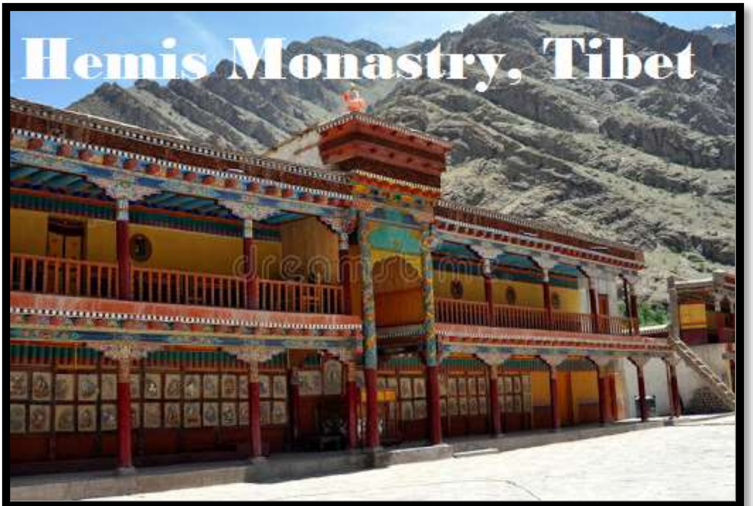


- **4)Louis Jacolliot**: The Jesus in India idea has been associated with his book "The Bible in India, or the Life of Jezeus Christna" in 1869. Jacolliot compares the accounts of the life of Bhagavan Krishna with that of Jesus Christ in the gospels and concludes that it could not have been a coincidence that the two stories have so many similarities in many of the finer details. He concludes that the account in the gospels is a myth based on the mythology of ancient India. However, Jacolliot is comparing two different periods of history (or mythology) and does not claim that Jesus was in India. But His writings were exposed by the Sanskrit Scholar Max Muller.
- **5)Nicolas Notovitch**: He was a Russian war correspondent, Cossack officer, spy, and journalist. He was one of the main writers whose works have led to the Jesus-in-India. He had published "The Unknown Life of Jesus Christ" in Paris in 1894. It claimed Jesus, called Issa by monks, studied under yogis in India, Nepal and Tibet. He claimed that while at the Hemis Monastery in Ladakh (Tibet) in 1894, he has seen and learned the manuscript, the Life of Saint Issa, Best of the Sons of Men, detailing Jesus' missing years. When Issa had attained the age of 13, Issa left the parental house in secret, departed from Jerusalem, and with the merchants set out towards Sind (Pakistan), with the object of perfecting himself in the Divine Word and of studying the laws of the great Buddhas.

JESUS'S BUDDHIST JOURNEY
(13 TO 29 YEARS OLD, LATE 30s to 80)
CHINA
SYRIA
KASHMIR
HEMIS MONASTERY
IRAQ
AFGHANISTAN
SRINAGAR
(JESUS'S BURIAL)
IRAN
TIBET
NAZARETH
(JESUS'S
CHILDHOOD
HOME)
PAKISTAN
LHASA
NEPAL
INDIA

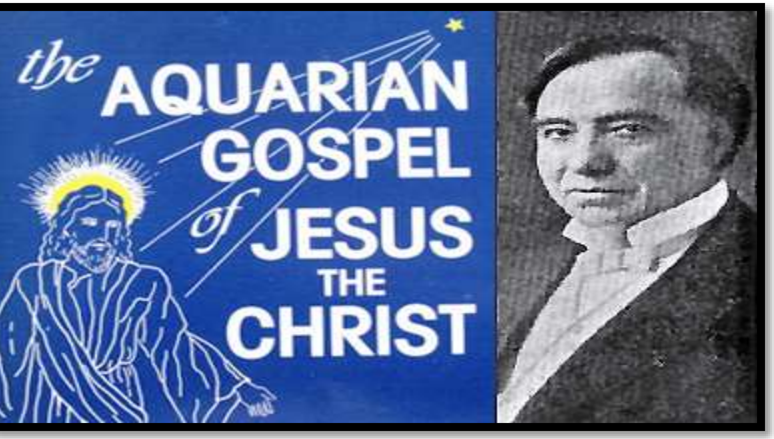
Unknown Years of Jesus

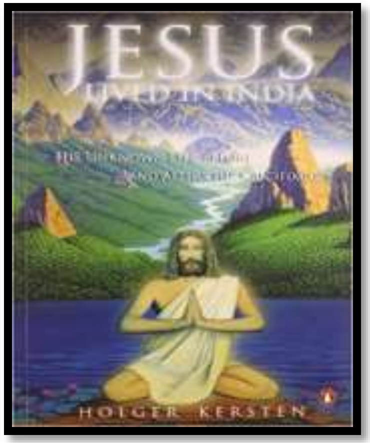


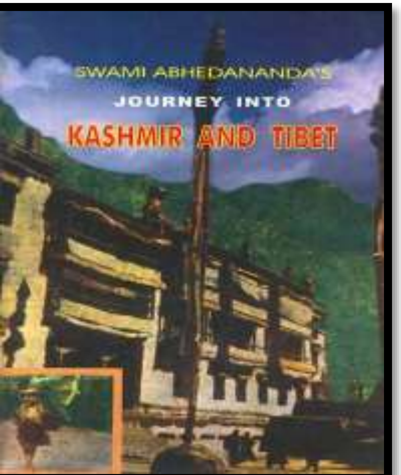


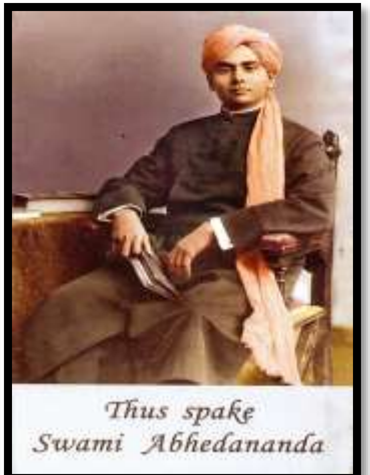
- **Book's Claims**: Then Issa crossed Punjab and reached Puri Jagannath, Rajgirh, Nalanda and other holy cities where he spent six years studied the Vedas under Brahmin priests. They taught him to read, understand the Vedas, to cure by aid of prayer, and to drive out evil spirits from the bodies of men, restoring unto them their sanity. Now Issa sought to teach the scriptures including the lower castes. But The Brahmins and Kshatriyas opposed him in this, and told him that the Sudras (a lower caste) were forbidden to read or even contemplate the Vedas. Issa denounced them severely for this. So the death plot was devised against him. But the Sudras warned him and he went to, Gautamides (birthplace of the Buddha) where he studied the sacred writings of Buddha. Six years after, Issa, had become a perfect expositor of the sacred writings. Then he left Nepal and the Himalayan Mountains, descended into the valley of Rajputana, and went towards the west, preaching to diverse peoples the supreme perfection of man. Following this, Issa briefly visited Persia where he preached to the Zoroastrians and then returned to Jerusalem at the age of 29.
- **Exposed**: Notovitch's theory was exposed by scholars Max Muller, J. Archibald Douglas, and Edgar J. Goodspeed have all presented solid refutations of the legend. Once his story had been re-examined by historians, Notovitch confessed to having fabricated the evidence.

Unknown Years of Jesus



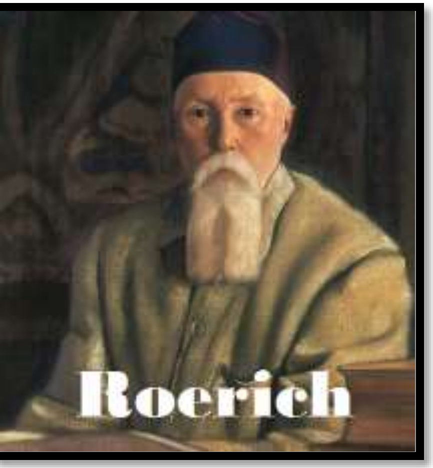


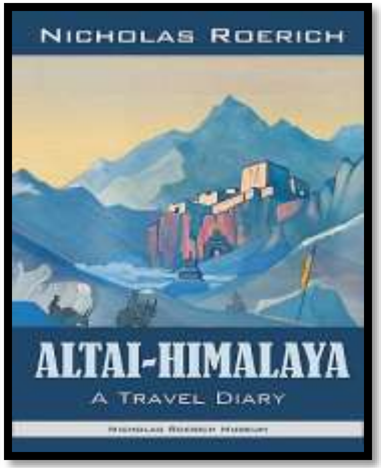


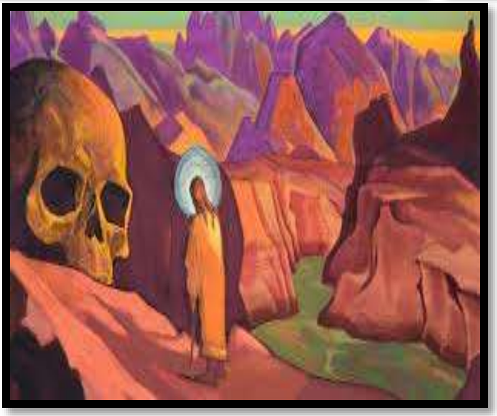


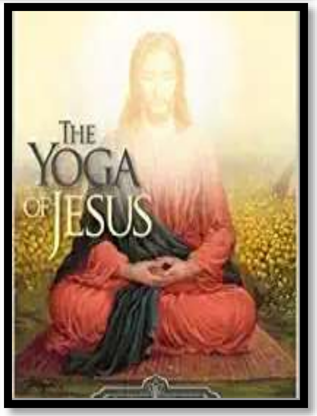
- <u>6)Levi H. Dowling</u>: He was an American Army chaplain. In 1911, he had published "The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ" which include "the 'lost' eighteen years of Jesus. The narrative follows the young Jesus across India, Tibet, Persia, Assyria, Greece and Egypt. Jesus sought to learn the Hindu art of healing, and became the pupil of Udraka, greatest of the Hindu healers." Levi proceeds to chronicle a visit to Tibet, where Jesus allegedly met Meng-ste, the greatest sage of the East: "And Jesus had access to all the sacred manuscripts, and, with the help of Meng-ste, read them all." Jesus eventually arrived in Egypt, and - in what must be considered a climax of this account of the "lost years".
- <u>7)Swami Abhedananda</u>: He was a direct disciple of the 19th century mystic Ramakrishna Paramahansa He was a colleague of Swami Vivekananda. He founded the Vedanta Society of New York in 1897 and the author of several books. He went to the Hemis Monastery to verify the story of Nicolas Notovitch in 1922. In Hemis Monastery, he claimed to have discovered a manuscript on the lost years of Jesus. The Lamas confirmed the Saint Issa story and even gave him a Tibetan translated copy which he published in a monthly publication called Visvavani which has been incorporated in the book Swami Abhedananda's Journey into Kashmir & Tibet published by the Ramakrishna Vedanta Math.

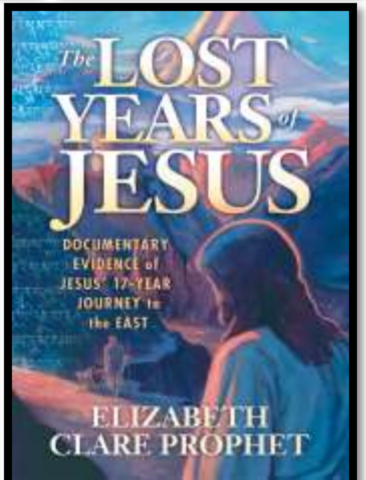
Unknown Years of Jesus





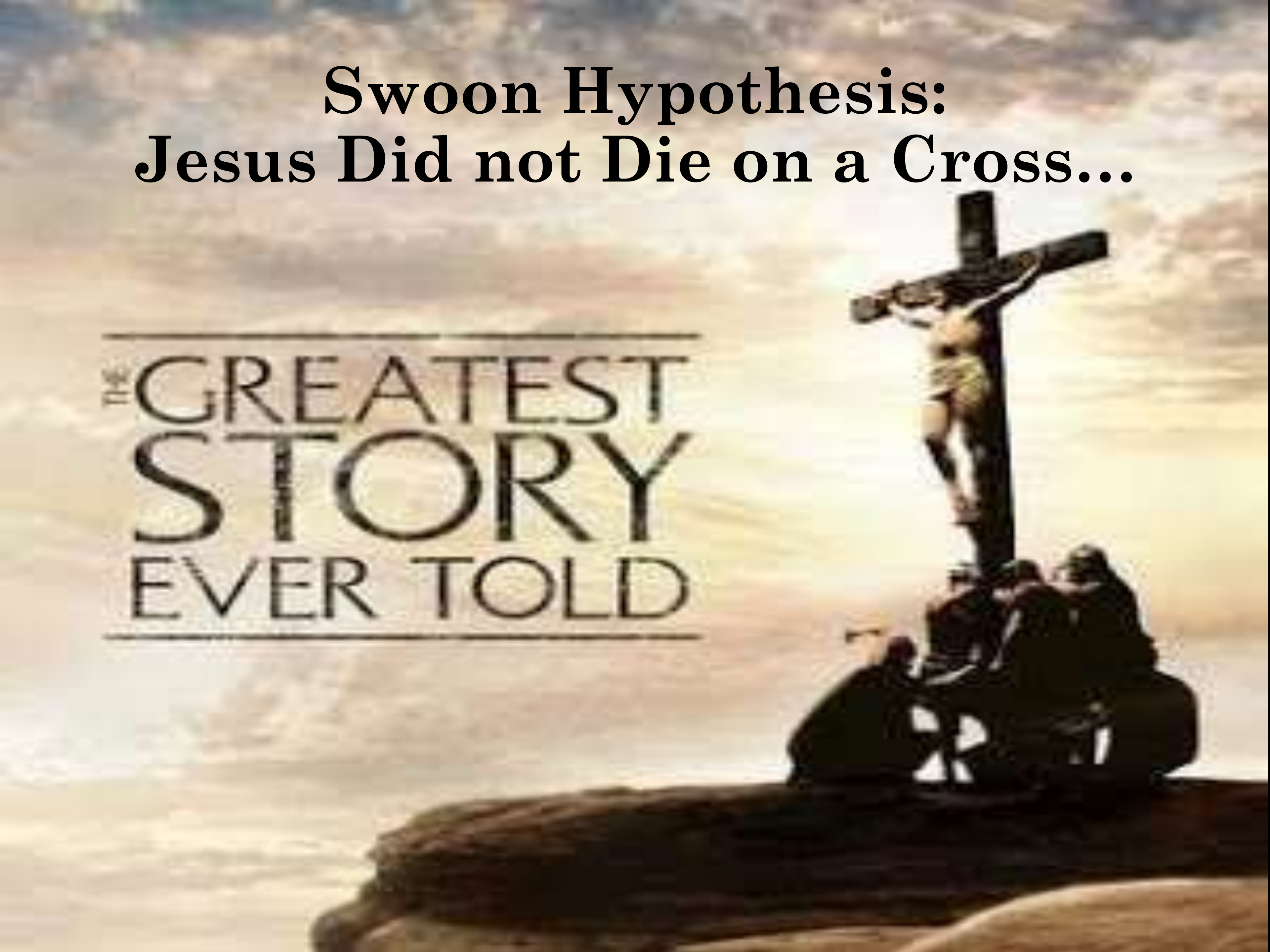






- 8).Nicholas Roerich: He was a Theosophist – claimed that from 1924 to 1928 he traveled throughout Central Asia and discovered that legends about Issa. In 1933, he published "Altai Himalaya" and makes reference to "writings" and "manuscripts" about Issa – some of which he claims to have seen and others about which people told him. He recounts legends of Issa shared with him by the Ladak people and lamas including that Issa traveled with merchants from Israel to India, Nepal, Ladakh and Tibet as both student and teacher. He allegedly recorded independently in his own travel diary the same legend of Issa that Notovitch had seen earlier.
- 9).Elizabeth Clara Prophet: She was an American New Age minister, self-proclaimed prophet and religious figure. In "The Lost Years of Jesus" (1984), Elizabeth Clare Prophet documents other supporters of Notovitch's work, the most prominent of which was Nicholas Roerich. She claims that Jesus travelled to India at the age of 13. She presents evidence of the journey, explaining that he encountered the philosophy of Buddhism and the notions of peace and nonviolence there. She explains how he was described in the East as Issa, and how he changed the lives of those he met there. She brings together the testimony of four eyewitnesses of these remarkable manuscripts plus three different translations of the texts.

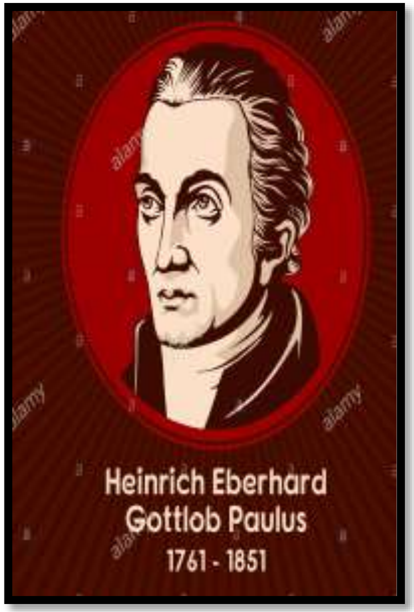
Swoon Hypothesis:
Jesus Did not Die on a Cross…

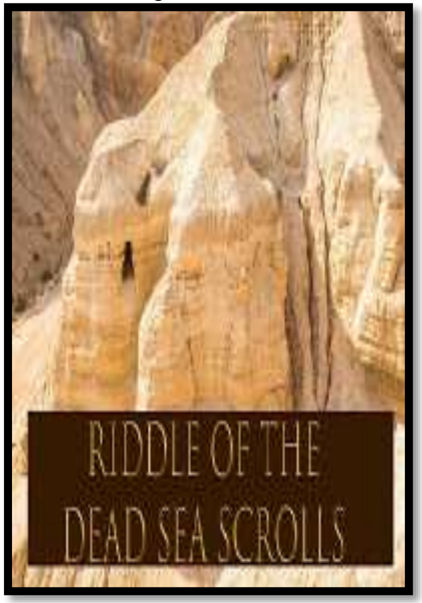


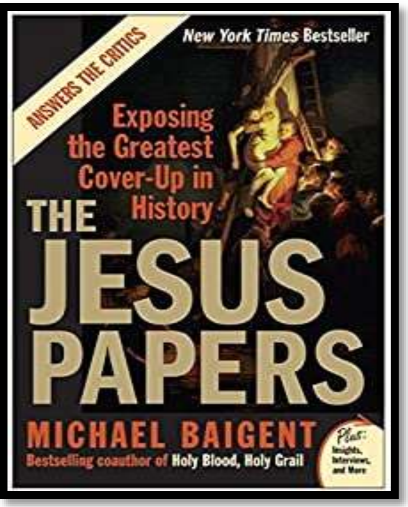
Unknown Years of Jesus

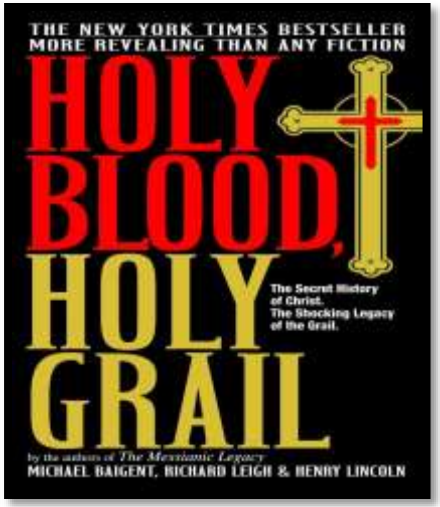
- **1).Survival of Jesus' Crucifixion**: By the third century A.D., there were no fewer than 25 different versions of Jesus' death and resurrection! Some have him not being put to death at all, some have him revived back to life, and some have Jesus living on to old age and dying in Egypt.
- **2).Swoon Hypothesis**: It is aim to explain the resurrection of Jesus, proposing that Jesus did not die on the cross, but merely fell unconscious ("swooned"), and was later revived in the tomb in the same mortal body. The swoon hypothesis in critical western literature concerns later years of Jesus after the crucifixion, with a range of hypotheses that suggest later death in Kashmir, Rome or during the Siege of Masada in Judea.
- **3).Karl Friedrich Bahrdt (1741-1792)**: He was an unorthodox German Protestant biblical scholar, theologian, and polemicist. He was early proponents of Swoon Hypothesis theory. He suggested that Jesus deliberately feigned his death, using drugs provided by the physician Luke to appear as a spiritual messiah and get Israel to abandon the idea of a political messiah.
- **4).Karl Venturini (1768-1849)**: He proposed that a group of Jesus' supporters dressed in white, had not expected him to survive the crucifixion, but heard groaning from inside the tomb, where Jesus had regained consciousness in the cool, damp air. They then frightened away the guards and rescued him.

Unknown Years of Jesus



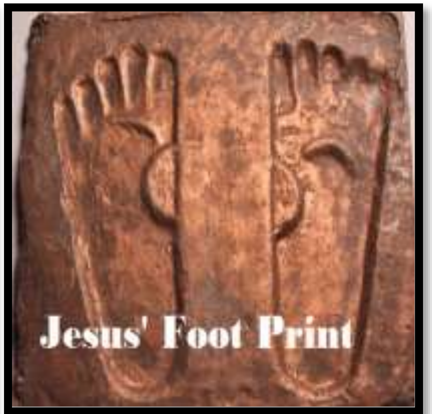


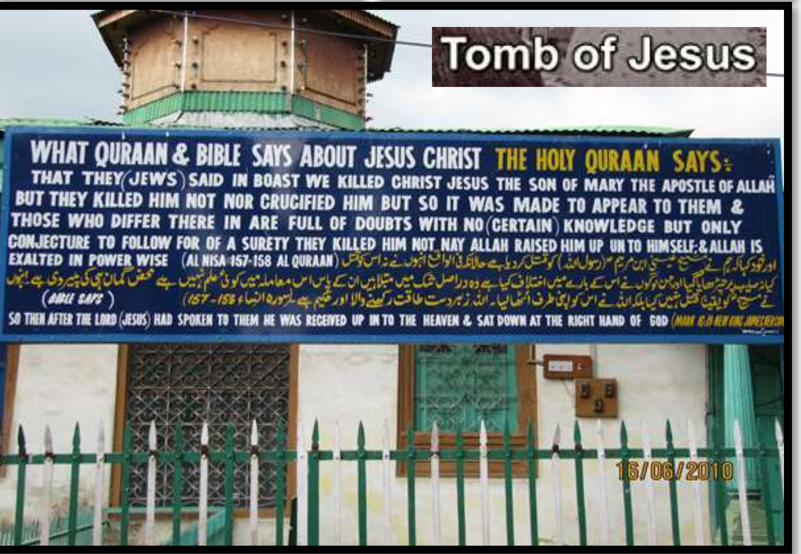




- 5).<u>Heinrich Paulus (1761-1851)</u>: He speculates that Jesus did not actually die on the cross, but somehow survived his execution and proclaimed that He had risen from the dead. He believed that Jesus had fallen into a temporary coma and somehow revived without help in the tomb.
- 6).<u>Pontius Pilate Bribed</u>: Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln, in their 1982 book Holy Blood, Holy Grail, speculated that Pontius Pilate was bribed to allow Jesus to be taken down from the cross before he was dead. In 1992, Barbara Thiering explored the theory in depth in her book "Jesus and the Riddle of the Dead Sea Scrolls". In 2006, Baigent published "The Jesus Papers", a book that describes how Jesus may have survived the crucifixion.
- 7).<u>Medical Evidence</u>: The Journal of the American Medical Association (1986), which concluded Jesus was very probably dead even prior to the spear being thrust into his side, and that any swoon hypothesis is entirely irreconcilable with contemporary medical science. This 200 years old Swoon hypothesis is still the subject of debate in popular circles but the scholarly literature considers it uncontroversial that Jesus died during the process of crucifixion.

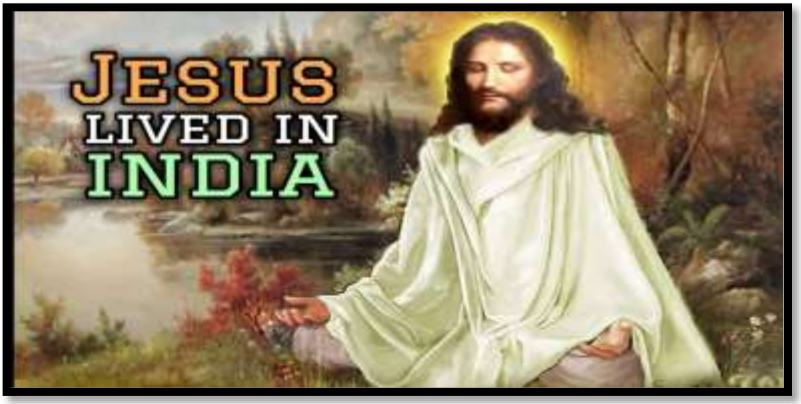
The Unknown Years of Jesus

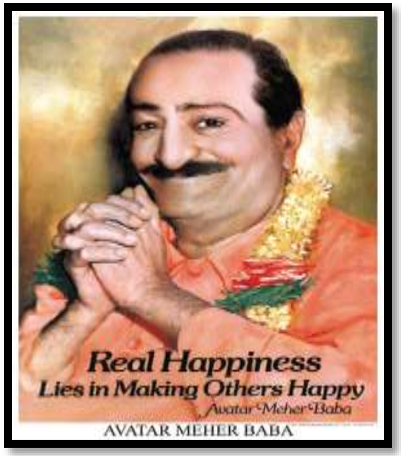


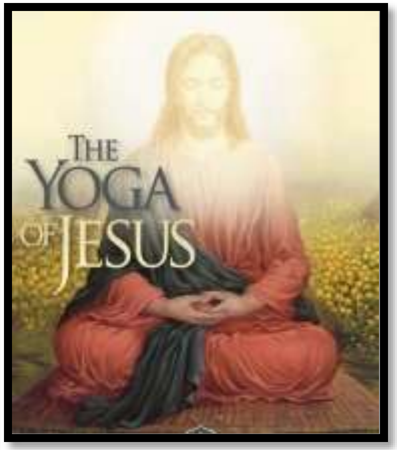


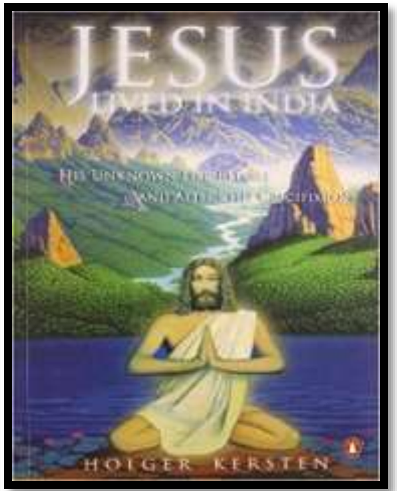
- **8).Quran**: Most Muslims believe Jesus was raised to Heaven without being put on the cross and God transformed another person (at times interpreted as Judas Iscariot or Simon of Cyrene) to appear exactly like Jesus who was crucified instead of Jesus (Quran 4:157–158). Some interpretations of Hadith (Collected traditions of Prophet Mohammed) and other traditions have Jesus' life continuing on earth.
- **9).Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1899)**: He was the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Sect. He say Jesus survived the crucifixion after a little swoon, then went to Kashmir along with Mary and died at the age of aged 120 while searching for the lost tribes of Israel. He identify the holy man Yuz Asaf buried at the Roza Bal shrine in Srinagar, India as Jesus on the basis of an account in the History of Kashmir by the Sufi poet Khwaja Muhammad Azam Didamari (1747). The American History Professor Paul C. Pappas (1991) states the Ahmadi identification of Yuzasaf with Jesus relies on legends and documents which include clear historical errors and that "it is almost impossible to identify Yuz Asaf with Jesus"
- **10).Modern Proponents**: Muslim preacher Ahmed Deedat of South Africa, whose book Crucifixion or Cruci-fiction has been widely printed and distributed all over the Muslim world. Zakir Naik. Rajneesh and Sathya Sai Baba also supported Swoon theory.

Unknown Years of Jesus



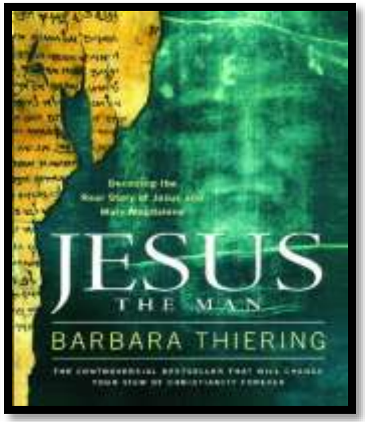


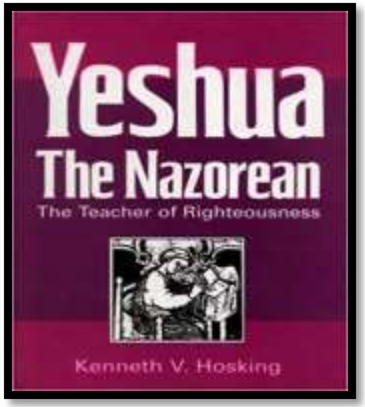


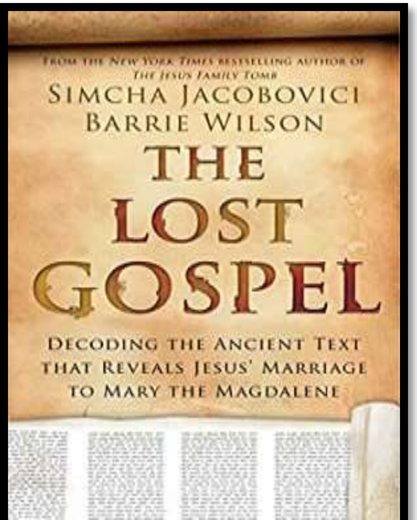


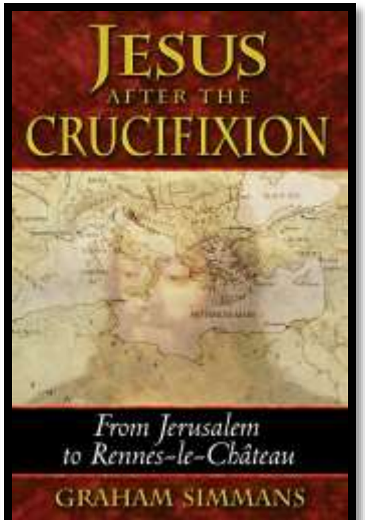
- **11).Mehar Baba (1925)**: He was an Indian Yoga Master. He said that When Jesus was crucified, he did not die; he entered the state of Nirvikalp Samadhi (the "I Am God" state without bodily consciousness). On the third day, he again became conscious of his body and he traveled secretly in disguise eastward with some apostles (Bartholomew, Thomas) to India. After reaching India, he traveled farther east to Rangoon in Burma where he remained for some time. He then went north to Kashmir where he settled. When his work was finished on earth, he dropped his body and entered Nirvikalp Samadhi permanently.
- **12).Holger Kersten**: He was a esoteric German writer, He combined the works of Notovitch, Levi H. Dowling, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and published Christ Lived in India in 1981. He asserts that Jesus lived the life of a Buddhist, practiced Buddhism and taught to His disciples. He furthermore avers that "many of the teachings of Jesus (Doctrine of Karma, Reincarnation) have been edited out of the modern Bible by the Church in order to constrain the entire Western culture within the narrow teachings of blind faith, organized religion and original sin! The German New Testament Scholar Wilhelm Schneemelcher states that the work of Holger Kersten is fantasy and has nothing to do with historical research.

Unknown Years of Jesus









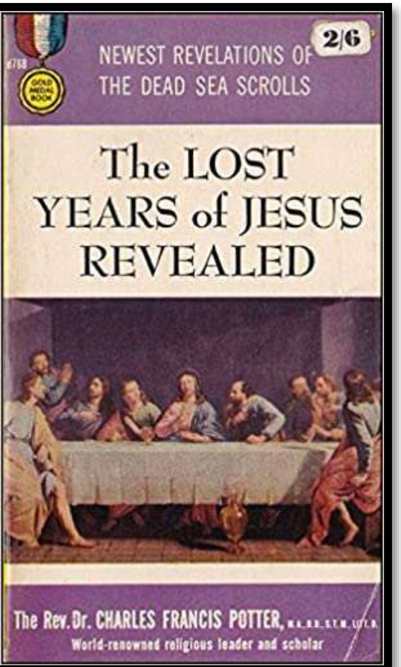
- **13).Barbara Thiering** (1992): In her book "Jesus the Man", she suggested that Jesus and Judas Iscariot had been crucified together but Jesus survived, married Mary Magdalene, travelled around the Mediterranean area and then died in Rome.
- **14).Kenneth Hosking** (1995): In his book "Yeshus: The Nazorean" he suggested that Jesus survived crucifixion. Jesus was the Teacher of Righteousness mentioned in the Dead Sea Scrolls and decades later died as the leader during the siege of Masada against Romans (73 AD).
- **15).Gnostic Texts**: Barrie Wilson and Simcha Jacobovici published "The Lost Gospel" in 2015. It is based on the early Christian Gnostic text discovered near the Upper Egyptian town of Nag Hammadi in 1945. Jesus married Mary Magdalene and had children during the lost years. But the book's assertions are not supported by mainstream Biblical scholarship. The Lost Gospel was described as historical nonsense by Markus Bockmuehl
- **16). Jesus in France by Graham Simmans**: He had published "Jesus after the Crucifixion: From Jerusalem to Rennes-le-Château" in 2007. Jesus did not die from his crucifixion, but instead, fled to Egypt. With his wife, Mary Magdalene, they fled to southern France and they lived out their lives spreading Christianity in the area. John Jaeger, noted that 'his book will attract those who enjoy speculating about religious matters."

Unknown Years of Jesus

- **17).Japan Shingo Theory**: Jesus Christ did not die on the cross at Golgotha. Instead his brother, Isukiri, took his place on the cross, while Jesus fled to northern Japan. Once in Japan, he changed his name to Torai Tora Daitenku, became a rice farmer, married a twenty-year old Japanese woman named Miyuko, and raised three daughters near what is now Shingō. While in Japan, it is asserted that he traveled, learned, and eventually died at the age of 106. According to the customs of the time, Jesus' bones were collected, bundled, and buried in the mound purported to be the grave of Jesus Christ.
- **18).American Native Theory**: According to the Book of Mormon, Jesus visited the lost tribe of Israel called the Nephites in America (3 Nephi chapters 11-18). L. Taylor Hansen in her book "He Walked the Americas" in 1963 explores Native American legends that say a "White Prophet" visited tribes throughout Peru, South and Central America, Mexico and North America in his missing years. This White Prophet had the ability to speak in a thousand languages, raise the dead and heal the sick, and taught in the same words a Jesus.
- **19).Holy Russia Theory**: The Russian artist Mikhail Nesterov depicts a resurrected Christ appearing to the Russian people, along with the apostles Peter, James, and John in 1905. It is influenced by a folk tale about Jesus visiting the ancient Russians following his resurrection.

The Unknown Years of Jesus

- **20).Jesus in Qumran**: The Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered between 1946 and 1956. Scholars have dated the scrolls from approximately 200 BCE to 70 CE. From the moment of their discovery, some scholars suggested that at least some of the scrolls may be the work of early Christians. One of the fragments called by scholars by the very unappealing name of "4Q541" explicitly refers to Jesus. It sounds a lot like Jesus called as "Son of God" and "Son of the Most High."
- **21):Charles Francis Potter**: He was an American Priest, who had published a book "The Lost year of Jesus Revealed" in 1962. In his analysis he has proven Mother of Christianity was the splinter Jewish sect sometimes called the Essenes. The Essenes were the intermediary step between Judaism and Christianity. He made the case that both Jesus and John the Baptist were Essenes, whose philosophy embraced a view of oneness of everything in the universe with God, and espoused nonviolence. He found many similarities between Jesus's teachings and those of the Essenes. So, the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal the possibility that Jesus may have studied with or even lived with the Essenes during His lost years. Scholars are gradually admitting the startling parallels between his doctrines and vocabulary and those of the Essenes. It's time to reexamine The Dead Sea Scrolls and their translations.



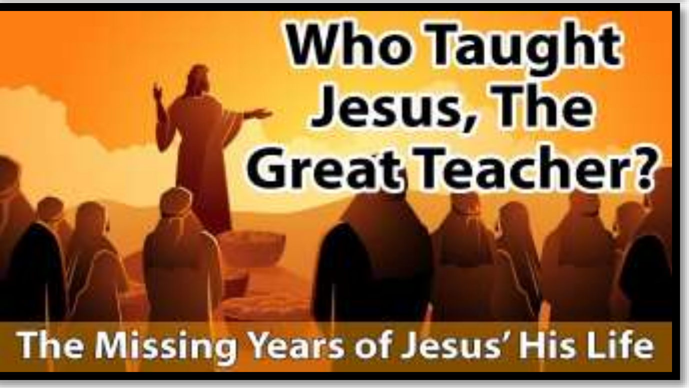
Unknown Years of Jesus

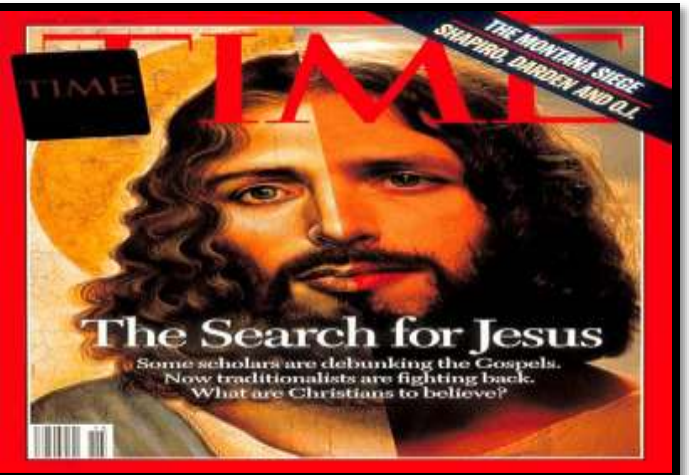
- **22).The Bible is not Biography**: We need to understood that the Gospels are not an exhaustive biography of Jesus' life, nor were they intended to be. It is talking about the salvation plan of God and for leading of a perfectly human life unto to the redemption of humanity.
- **23). Bible**: There are strong indirect evidences that Jesus never traveled East for eighteen years. First, Jesus was well-known as a carpenter's son (Mark 6:3, Mat 13:55) and as a carpenter's son (Matt. 13:55). Some of His parables and teachings drew upon His experience as a carpenter (Matt. 7:24-27). Moreover, the people in and around Nazareth displayed familiarity with Jesus, as if they had had regular contact with Him for a prolonged time (Luke 4:16,22). Jesus often displayed reverence for the Old Testament (Mat 5:18). He clearly distinguishes between the creation and the Creator, unlike Eastern thought (Mk 12:29). He taught the need for redemption, not gnosis (knowledge) (Jn 3:16). Jesus is often seen quoting from the Old Testament in the gospels, but not once does He quote from (or even mention) the Vedas! The Jews accused Him of many offenses, including breaking the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1-14), blasphemy (John 10:31-33), and doing miracles in Satan's power (Matt. 12:24). But they never accused Him of teaching anything learned in the East. The Gospels teachs that "No years are 'lost'; rather, some years are summarized."

Unknown Years of Jesus

- **23).Evaluation**: Ancient Buddhist manuscripts say Jesus left Palestine and traveled to India, Nepal, Ladakh, and Tibet. The proponents of the Jesus-in-India theory hold up a number of other texts and artifacts they maintain "prove" not only Jesus's existence on Earth but also his presence in India. Buddhists were trying to demonstrate that Jesus, the great wise man of the West, was influenced by Buddhism. In this way, the Hemis Monastery in Ladakh (Tibet) text has been used as propaganda to raise Buddhism over Christ and Christianity. When such texts and artifacts are closely examined, they serve as no evidence at all, except of priest craft. the "Issa" text seem to be late writings, to the 15th century based on traditions, not eyewitness accounts.
- **24).Buddhism contrasting Christianity**: Christianity is at its core monotheistic and relies on a God as a Creator, Buddhism is generally non-theistic. There are inherent differences in the Christian and Buddhist beliefs regarding the End Times and eschatology. Buddhism refers to karma, specific cycles of life. Buddhist eschatology does not relate to any "final things", or that the world will end one day. Grace is part of the very fabric of Christian theology, in Buddhism no deity can interfere with karma, and hence the notion of any type of grace is inadmissible within these teachings. The crucifixion of Jesus as a single event in history that acts for the atonement of sins is a central element of Christian belief but it is not possible for Buddhism.

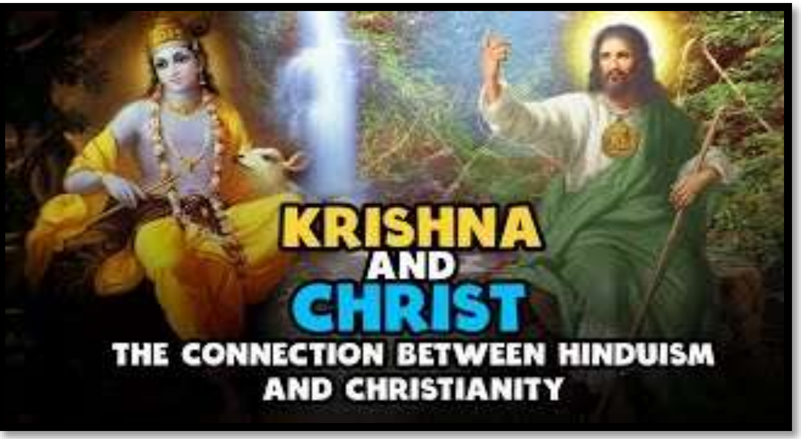
Christians Responses to Jesus Went to East Theory



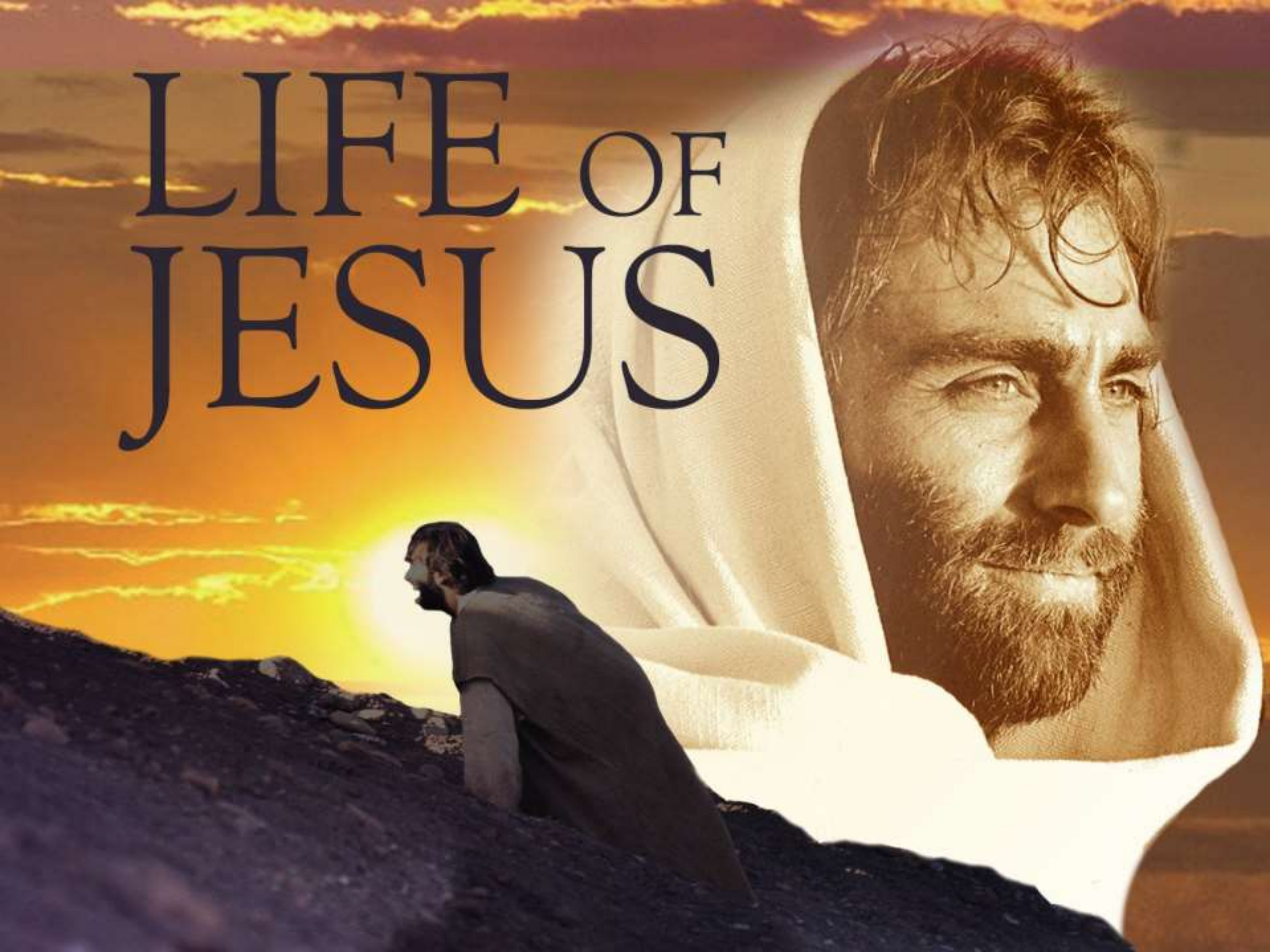


- **NT Scholarship**: Modern mainstream Christian scholarship has generally rejected any travels by Jesus to India, Tibet or surrounding areas as without historical basis:
- 1).**Robert Van Voorst** states that modern scholarship has "almost unanimously agreed" that claims of the travels of Jesus to Tibet, Kashmir or rest of India contain "nothing of value". 2).**Marcus Borg** states that the suggestions that an adult Jesus traveled to Egypt or India and came into contact with Buddhism are "without historical foundation". 3)**John Dominic Crossan** states that none of the theories presented about the travels of Jesus to fill the gap between his early life.
- 4)**Leslie Houlden** states that although modern parallels between the teachings of Jesus and Buddha have been drawn, these comparisons emerged after missionary contacts in the 19th century and there is no historically reliable evidence of contacts between Buddhism and Jesus. 5)**Paula Fredriksen** states that no serious scholarly work places Jesus outside the backdrop of 1st century Palestinian Judaism. 6).**F.C. Baur**: "Anything is possible, but what is probable?" It is probable that Jesus did not visit Tibet.
- **Christianization**: Christians acknowledge that news of Jesus eventually reached India and Tibet as a result of the missionary efforts of the early church. It is conceivable that when devotees of other religions heard about Jesus, they tried to modify what they heard to make it appear that Jesus and His teachings were compatible with their own belief systems.

Unknown Years of Jesus



- **25).In-Culturation**: The Issa myth apparently represents a Christianization of legends. In fact the proselytizing Christians who attempted to use the natives' belief in Buddha in order to increase Christ's stature. The resemblances between various Indian sects and Christianity likewise led to tales about the Christian missionaries Thomas, Bartholomew and Pantaenus also proselytizing in India. The early Nestorians Christian sect, who lived in India and elsewhere, and may well have spread the syncretistic fable to other Asian ports of call. It is possible that for several centuries these unreliable legends were recorded on scrolls and circulated among the convents in India.
- **26).Conclusion**: Not all of these tales can be true, obviously, unless Jesus is polymorphous and phantasmagoric, a perspective that in reality represents that of the mythology. All of the "Jesus went to East" accounts contain historical inaccuracies, exaggerated one and their sources are unreliable. Jesus taught Judaism, not Hinduism. However, the world still awaits bona fide hard evidence that can be physically examined by all interested parties. What do you think? Did Jesus really travel to India as a young man? So, just what happened during the early years of Jesus' life if he didn't go India (Great Brittan, Japan, Egypt, France and America as another myth tells the story)?


LIFE OF
JESUS

The Baptism of Jesus

- **Mile Stones**: The five major milestones in life of Jesus are his Baptism, Transfiguration, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension.
- **Baptism**: After the Epiphany, which is seen as the "first manifestation" of the Lord, the Baptism is the "second manifestation" which marks the beginning of Christ's public ministrations. The baptism of Jesus at the age of 30 is a major event in the life of Jesus ((Mat 3:13–17; Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21–23, Jn 1:29–33).
- **Trinity**: Baptism is the portrayal that Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus' baptism account is a beautiful portrayal of the loving union of the Trinity. God the Father spoke from the heavens, the Son of God was baptized, and the Holy Spirit descended in a form like a dove.
- **Significances**: Jesus' baptism as an expression of His fundamental submission to the will of the Father and His complete identification with sinners. It was necessary not for him, but for mankind. In Christian baptism, we become adopted children of the Father, members of the Church, the Body of Christ, and temples of the Holy Spirit.
- **Feast**: In the western churches, the Feast of the Baptism of Christ was assigned to the first Sunday after Epiphany, but in Eastern Churches it is on 19 January (Julian calendar). After the baptism, Jesus withdrew to the Judean desert to fast for 40 days and nights.

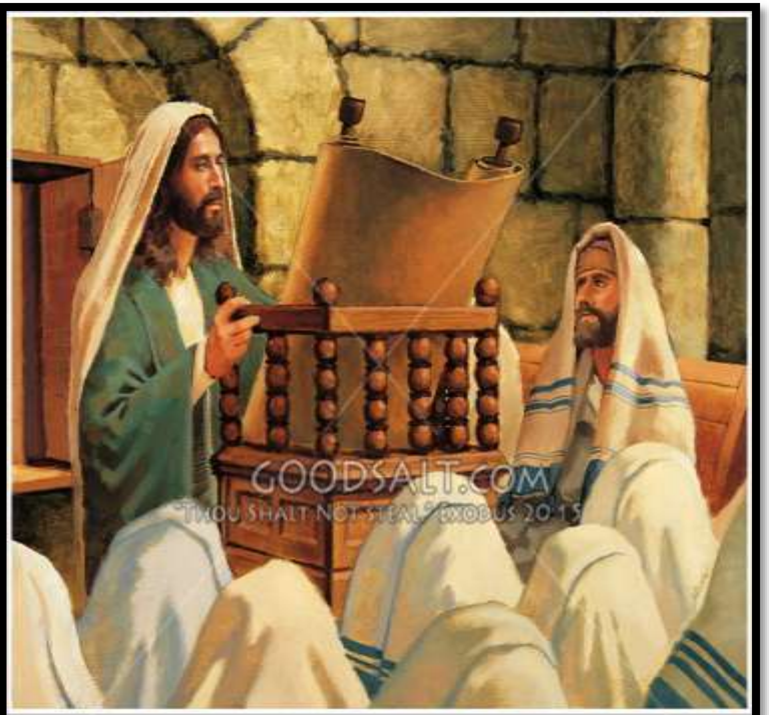
The Transfiguration of Jesus

- **Etymology**: Transfiguration is one of the five significant event in the life of Jesus. The word "transfiguration" comes from the Latin roots *trans-* ("across") and *figura* ("form, shape"). It thus signifies a change of form or appearance (Mat 17:1–8, Mk 9:2–8, Lk 9:28–36, Jn 1:14, 2 Pet 1:16–18).
- **Mount Tabor**: Jesus and three of his apostles, Peter, James, and John, went to a mountain. However, when they got there Jesus clothes became dazzlingly white and his appearance changed. Jesus "was changed to a different form, not of nature, but of glory. Moses and Elijah appeared and they represent the Law and the Prophets of the OT. Both point forward to the Messiah and Jesus' sufferings in their conversation (Lk 24:27,44). These three disciples witness the coming of the Kingdom of God "in power" (Mat 16:28, Mk 9:1, Lk 9:27).
- **Significance**: It is a pivotal moment, and the setting on the mountain is presented as the point where human nature meets God: the meeting place of the temporal and the eternal, with Jesus himself as the connecting point, acting as the bridge between heaven and earth. It is the symbol and hope of our glory in heaven.
- **Feast**: This miracle is unique and happens to Jesus himself. The Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic Church and Anglican churches, commemorate the Feast of the Transfiguration on August 6, a major festival.

The Miracles of Jesus

- **Miracles**: A miracle is defined in current dictionaries as a supernatural event in the physical world that surpasses all known human or natural powers, more often than not incapable of being explained by the laws of nature. But God has the prerogative to supersede them.
- **Purposes of Miracles**: More than 40 of Jesus' miracles are recorded in the Bible. The majority are faith healings, exorcisms, resurrection, control over nature and forgiveness of sins. One clear purpose of miracles was to authenticate the character of Jesus and his relationship with his heavenly Father. A second purpose of miracles was to authenticate the message about Jesus.
- **Views of Miracles**: For many liberal Christians, consider miracle stories to be metaphorical. Christian authors also view the miracles of Jesus not merely as acts of power and omnipotence, but as works of love and mercy, performed not with a view to awe by omnipotence, but to show compassion for sinful and suffering humanity. And each miracle involves specific teachings. We modern people think of miracles as the suspension of the natural order, but Jesus meant them to be the restoration of the natural order. Miracles still happen, and Christians should avoid the two extremes of seeing everything as a miracle and seeing nothing as a miracle. Even if we don't frequently see extraordinary miraculous events, God is actively at work in the world, and building his church (Matt. 16:18).

Was Jesus a Rabbi?

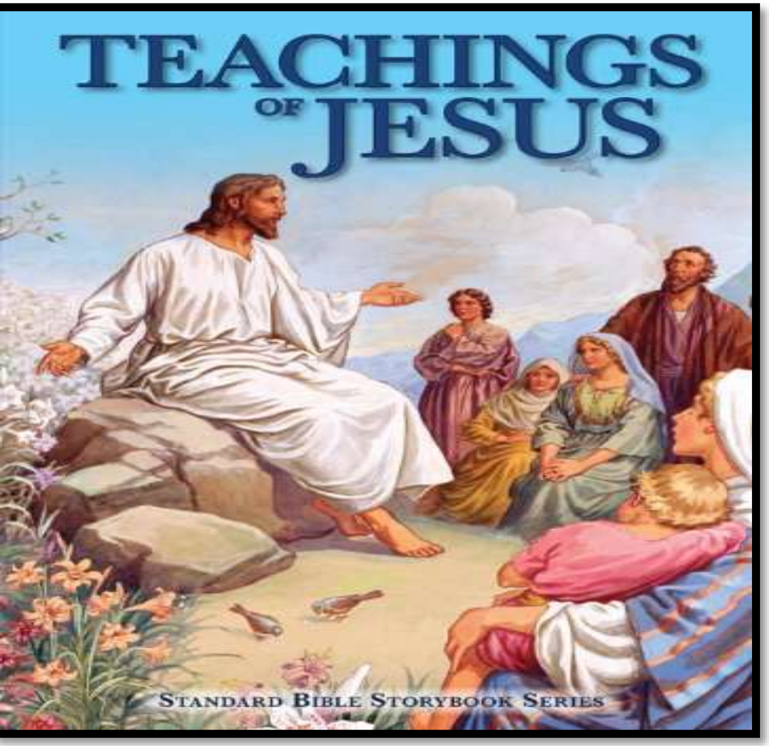


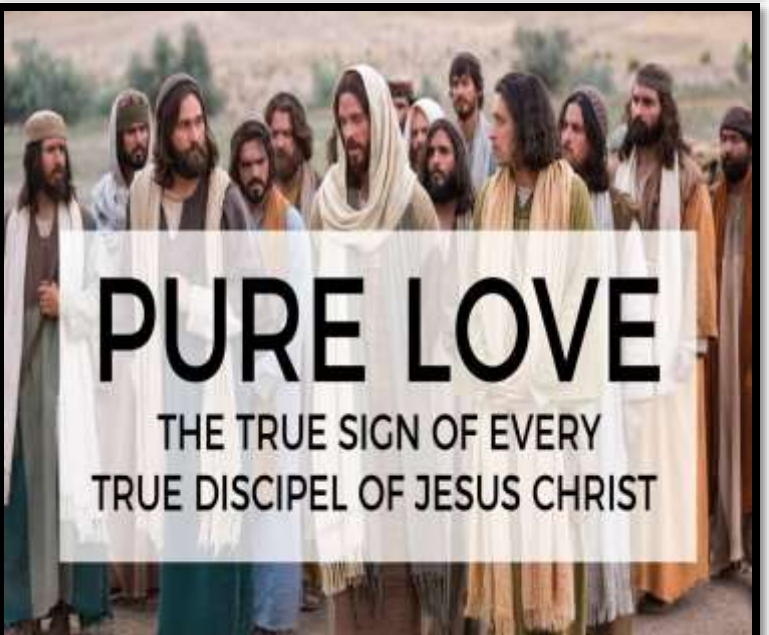
- **Rabbi**: Jesus was sometimes called "rabbi" in the Gospels (Matthew 26:25; Mark 9:5, John 20:16). The term "rabbi" is derived from the Hebrew word רַב (rav), which in biblical Hebrew meant "master of a slave or of a disciple". Thus, רַבִּי (rabi) literally meant "my master" (a form of address like "sir" in English).

- **Teacher**: The word "rabbi," is translated "teacher" (John 1:38). The title "teacher" is more common. Both Jesus and John the Baptist were called "rabbi" (Jn 3:26). While Jesus was never part of the official temple leadership, He was still considered a rabbi because of His ministry of teaching. It wasn't until after the destruction of the temple in AD 70 that the title of רַבִּי (Raabi) took on a more formal meaning for those who were ordained in the rabbinic movement. It was a term of honor bestowed on sages or those who knew and taught the Scriptures.

- **Ordination**: A Rabbi is a member of the clergy in the Rabbinic Judaism. Rabbis often function as leaders of synagogues where they provide instruction in the Hebrew Scriptures and Jewish traditions. Rabbis preach sermons, interpret the Old Testament, and perform other functions similar to those of Christian pastors. As time went on, the definition of rabbi continued to evolve. So, yes, Jesus was a rabbi, as defined in the first century, but today He would not hold the same title, as defined in modern-day Judaism.

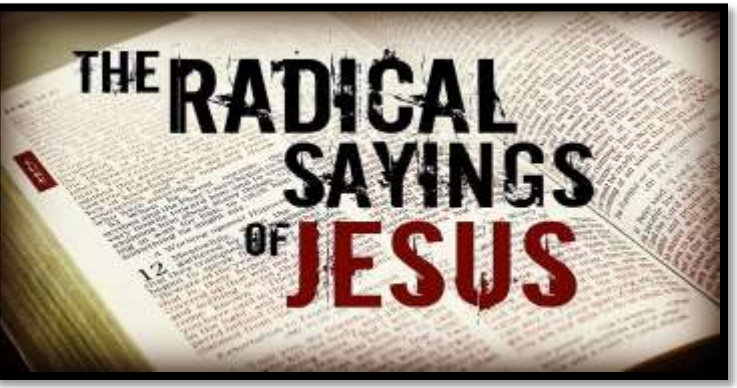
The Messages of Jesus

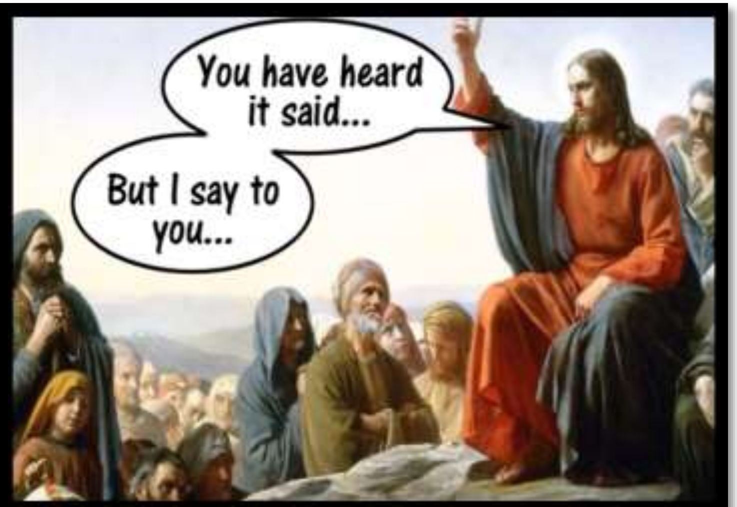




- **1).Methodology**: For 3 1/2 years Jesus preached, did good works, and performed miracles. He often preached through parables, events from everyday life, simple stories with moral lessons to communication His ideas.
- **2).Religious**: Jesus' teachings contained many ideas from Jewish Religion, such as monotheism, or belief in only one god, and the principles of the Ten Commandments. He proclaimed himself to be the Son of God. Jesus defined religion differently from the Jews of His day.
- **3).Transformation**: Jesus stressed the transformation of the inner person. Jesus said, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, and false witness, slander" (Matthew 15:19). These are all offenses which break God's moral law.
- **4).Social**: Jesus voiced ethical concepts of justice, compassion, morality, humility, simplicity, charity, and service to others. The Sermon on the Mount stressed ethical themes of mercy and sympathy for the poor and helpless. He attracted large crowds, and many people were touched by his message.
- **5).Economy**: Jesus talked about how money affects people and how to use money for the good of others (Mk 10:21,22) Jesus' message, which ignored wealth and status and praised the poor grew immensely popular leading to large crowds wherever he went.

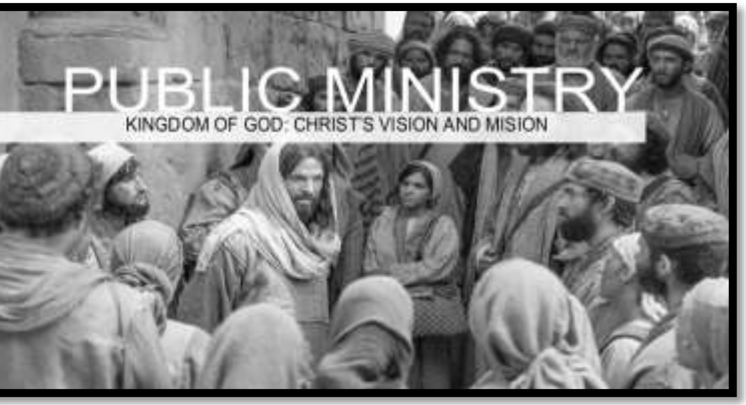
The Messages of Jesus



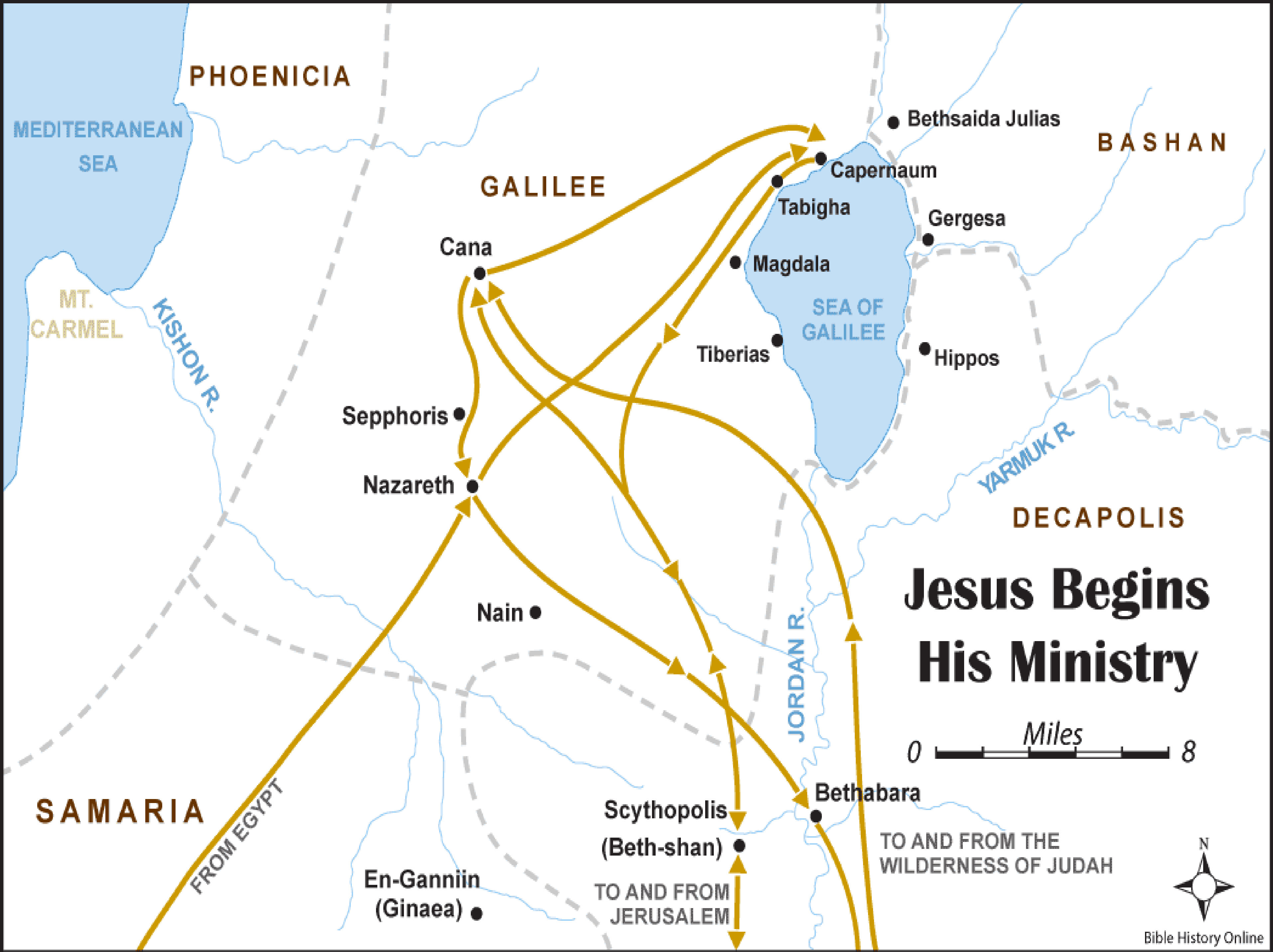


- 6).Relationship with God: He emphasized God's personal relationship to each human being. 1). Love your Enemy, and Love one another (Mat 5:44), 2). Do to others what you would have them do to you (Mat 7:12). 3). Preached forgiveness instead of "an eye for an eye" (Mat 5:38), 4). Set your heart on God and His righteousness and your outward actions will quickly follow (Mat 6:33). 5). Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mt 25:40). 6). Be merciful just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36). It's Jesus Revolutionary ideas.
- 7).About Women: Jesus elevated women status by his very words and actions. The first revelation that he was the Messiah was to a woman (John 4:25-26). Women were members of his group of disciples (Mark 15:41). His first resurrection appearance was to a woman (John 20:1-16). The very first people who were commissioned to be evangelists were women (Matthew 28:1-10; John 20:17).
- 8).Eternal Life: Jesus has welcomed ALL people, poor, and oppressed People found comfort in the message of love. Jesus urged people to turn away from their sins and practice kindness. He taught that people to prepare for God's Judgment Day. He also taught that God would end wickedness in the world and would establish an eternal kingdom after death for people who sincerely repented their sins and go to heaven. Jesus' message of eternal life in heaven appealed to many people, especially the poor.

The Ministry of Jesus



- **Ministry of Jesus**: Jesus' early Galilean ministry begins when after his baptism. He preaches and recruits his first disciples who begin to travel with him (Mat 4:18-20). In the later Judean ministry Jesus starts his final journey to Jerusalem (Mk 8:31). The final ministry begins with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Mk 11:1-11).
- **Popularity of Jesus**: As Jesus preached from town to town, His fame grew. The popularity of Jesus grew amongst the people with word of miracles. He attracted large crowds, and many people were touched by his message (Mat 4:25, 15:30, Mk 3:10 Lk 8:19). As Jesus preached and traveled across Judaea and Galilee his teachings won followers all across the Roman Empire.
- **Jesus as Messiah**: According to biblical tradition, God had promised that a savior known as the Messiah would arrive and restore the kingdom of the Jews (Ezek 37:27-27, Dan 7:13,14, Micah 5:2, Zech 9:9). Many believed that such a savior had arrived. They view Jesus as the Messiah; but the Jewish leaders see Him as a heretic(Mark 2:6, 16; 3:22; Matthew 9:11; 12:2).
- **The Triumph Entry of Jesus**: Around A.D. 29, Jesus travels to Jerusalem during Passover and the excited crowds welcomed Him as the Messiah (Mk 11:9,10). But the Jewish leaders denied that Jesus was the Messiah and said his teachings were blasphemy (Jn 10:33, Lk 19:39,40). but many began to believe that Jesus was the Messiah.


Jesus Begins His Ministry
PHOENICIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
GALILEE
BASHAN
MT. CARMEL
KISHON R.
Bethsaida Julias
Capernaum
Tabigha
Gergesa
Cana
Magdala
SEA OF GALILEE
Tiberias
Hippos
Sepphoris
YARMUK R.
Nazareth
DECAPOLIS
Nain
JORDAN R.
Miles
0
8
SAMARIA
FROM EGYPT
Scythopolis
(Beth-shan)
Bethabara
TO AND FROM THE WILDERNESS OF JUDAH
En-Ganniin
(Ginaea)
TO AND FROM JERUSALEM
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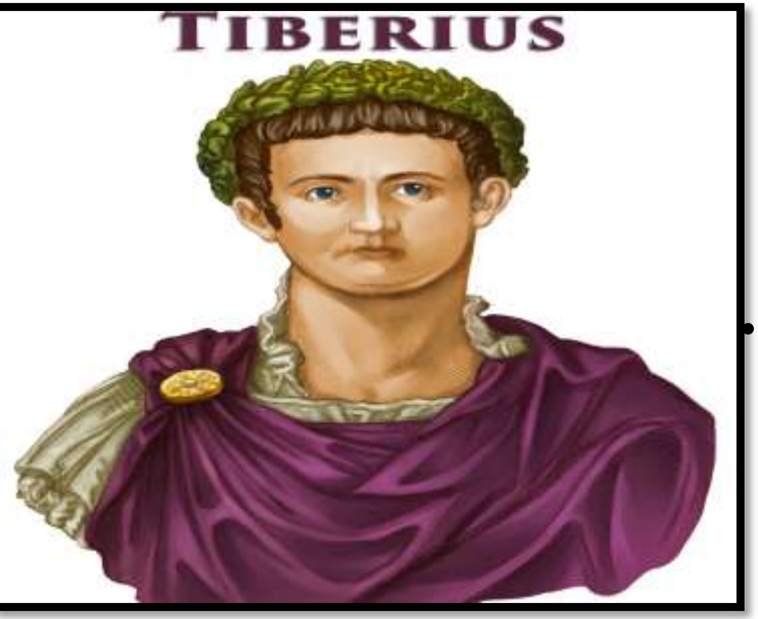
Emperor Tiberius (14-37AD)

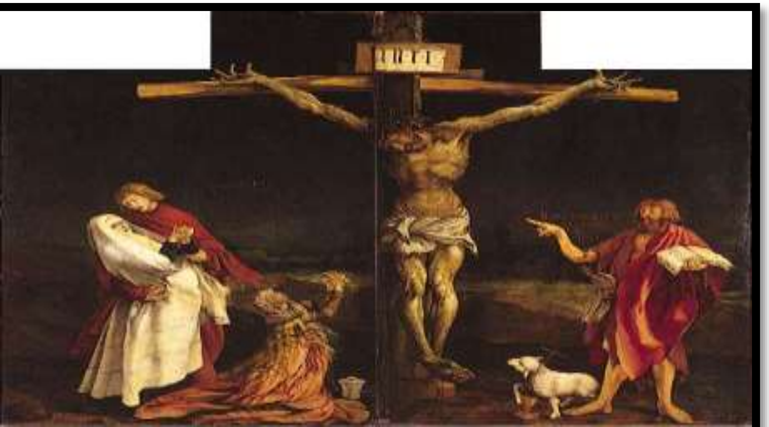


- **Tiberius**: He succeeded his stepfather, Augustus and became the second Roman emperor. Tiberius, attempted to play the same role as Augustus: that of the reluctant public servant who wants nothing more than to serve the state. Tiberius's laws and policies were both patient and far-seeing. and the power of Rome was never more secure.
- **Tiberius and Jesus**: Tiberius was the Roman Emperor during Jesus' adulthood. He appointed Pontius Pilate as procurator of Judea (from 26-36 AD). Luke 3:1 mentions the emperor Tiberius to locate John the Baptist's ministry. The trial of Jesus, which occurred during Tiberius' reign. It was the first major confrontation between the Roman authorities and the Founder of Christianity (Mark 14: 1; Luke 23: 1-25; John 11:47-50;18:38; 19:6; Acts 3:13-17).
- **Jesus and Ceaser**: The Gospels do not refer specifically to the emperor very often. Tiberius is mentioned on two other occasions by his title "Caesar" but without his name. The "paying the tax to Caesar" scene accounts for two thirds of the references to the Roman Emperor (12 times total: Matt 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26). Jesus is charged with forbidding the payment of taxes to the emperor (Luke 23:2). In John 19:12-15, the chief priests tell Pilate he is no friend of the emperor if he releases Jesus and then they declare: "we have no king but the emperor." It is not known whether Tiberius had heard of Jesus, or knew about the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Trials of Jesus

- **Arrest of Jesus**: The Roman leaders concerned that Jesus would lead a revolt due to his popularity in around 30 CE. Jesus was arrested because He preached that God would come to rule the world and the Kingdom of God is at hand. The arrest led immediately to his trial before the Sanhedrin. The Jewish leaders were deeply threatened by Jesus' teachings. Because Jesus called himself the Son of God declared himself the Messiah (Mat 26:63,64). The council condemned Jesus Christ to death (Jn 18:19).
- **Points Pilate**: He was the Roman governor of Judaea (26-36 CE), under the Roman Emperor Tiberius (14-37 CE). On the occasion of the feast of Passover, Pilate was in Jerusalem. The Jewish leaders dragged Jesus before Pilate to be tried for blasphemy—for claiming, they said, to be King of the Jews (Lk 23:2). The claim that Jesus was the Messiah was a threat to Roman rulers, power, authority of Roman rulers was questioned.
- **A threat to Rome?**: Pilate recognized that before him stood a preacher of the truth, a teacher of the people, and not an agitator against the power of Rome. Pilate came to the defense of Jesus before yielding to the desire of the crowd (Mk 15:9, Lk 23:20). But Pilate feared that Jesus would lead an armed revolt against Rome, so he accused Jesus of defying the authority of Rome. Jesus was executed for disturbing the Roman peace during the reign of the emperor Tiberius (Mat 27:24,26).

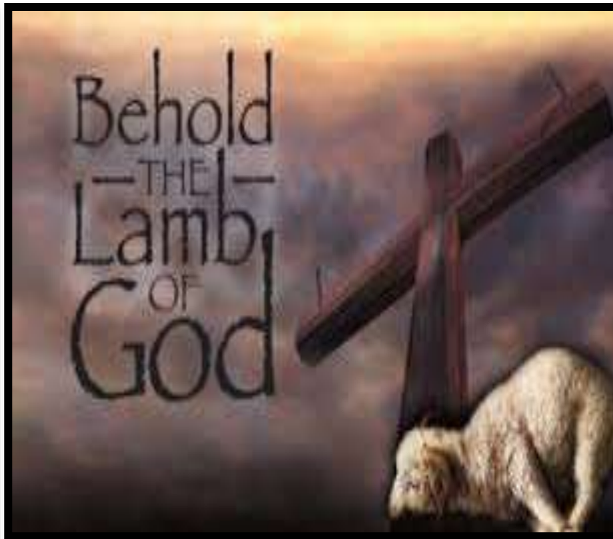
The Crucifixion of Jesus



- **Etymology**: The word "crucifixion" (pronounced krü-se-fik-shen) comes from the Latin crucifixio, or crucifixus, which means "fixed to a cross." This method of execution involved binding the victim's hands and feet and nailing them to a cross of wood. Jesus' crucifixion is described in the Bible (Mat 27:27-56, Mk 15:21-38, Lk 23:26-49, Jn 19:16-37). This type of capital punishment was primarily reserved for traitors, captive armies, slaves and the worst of criminals in the ancient world.
- **Significance**: Christian theology teaches that Christ's death provided the perfect atoning sacrifice for the sins all humankind, thus making the crucifix, or cross, one of the defining symbols of Christianity. The central pillars of Christianity originate from the story of the trial, crucifixion, and death of Jesus Christ Jesus gave his life willingly as a sacrifice for sin (Mark 10:45; John 18:11). Christians regularly confess that it was their sins (not the misdeeds of either Romans or Jews) that brought Jesus to the cross (Rom 5:8-9; 1Tim 1:15).
- **Date of Crucifixion**: There is no consensus regarding the exact date of the crucifixion of Jesus, although it is generally agreed by biblical scholars that it was on a Friday on or near Passover (Nisan 14 / 7 April), of the year 30 AD. The early Christians did not represent the Crucifixion realistically before the 4th Century; instead, the event was symbolized first by a lamb.

Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the World…

- **Stations of the Cross**: The14 images depicting Jesus on the day of his crucifixion. 1) Pilate condemns Jesus to death; 2) Jesus takes up his Cross; 3) He falls the first time; 4) Jesus meets his sorrowful mother Mary; 5) Simon of Cyrene is pressed into service to help Jesus carry his cross; 6) Veronica wipes his face with her veil; 7) He falls the second time; 8) Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem; 9) He falls the third time; 10) Jesus is stripped of his garments; 11) Jesus is nailed to the cross; 12) Jesus Christ dies on the cross; 13) Our Lord is taken down from the cross; 14) Christ is laid in the tomb.
- **Seven Words on the Cross**: Jesus made seven statements. 1) Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do (Lk 23:34), 2).Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise (Lk 23:43), 3).Woman, behold thy Son (Jn 19:26), 4). My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? (Mk 15:34), 5).I thirst (Jn 19:28), 6). It is finished (Jn 19:30), and 7). Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit (Lk 23:46).
- **Summary**: With bleeding back, carrying His cross under the heat of the now almost midday sun, He [Jesus] journeyed up the rugged heights of Golgotha. Reaching the appointed place of execution, His hands and feet were nailed to the tree. For three hours He hung there with the pitiless rays of the sun beating down [on] His thorn-crowned head. This was followed by the three hours of darkness, now over. That night and that day were hours into which an eternity was compressed. Before sunset, Jesus was taken down by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea and laid in Joseph's tomb.



The Resurrection of Jesus

- **1)Etymology**: Resurrection is the concept of coming back to life after death. It is from the Latin noun resurrectio -onis, means "a straightening from under again". In Christianity, resurrection most critically concerns the resurrection of Jesus, but also includes the resurrection of Judgment Day known as the resurrection of the dead.
- **2).Resurrection of Jesus**: The resurrection of Jesus, is the Christian belief that God raised Jesus on the third day, after his crucifixion at Calvary as first of the dead. The resurrected Lord soon appeared to His friends and followers and the apostles began to truly believe that Jesus was the Son of God, and from that day forward, he became known as Christ.
- **3).Significance**:. The death and resurrection of Jesus are the most important events, a foundation of the Christian faith. It provide validation of Jesus' incarnation. The entire Christian faith hinges upon the centrality of the resurrection of Jesus and the hope for a life after death. His resurrection is the guarantee that all the Christian dead will be resurrected at Christ's second coming (I Cor 15:12-22). Belief in the resurrection of the dead, and Jesus' role as judge, is codified in the Apostles' Creed, which is the fundamental creed of Christian baptismal faith. The Book of Revelation also makes many references about the Day of Judgment when the dead will be raised (Rev 20:11-15).

The Resurrection of Jesus

- **4).Easter**: Easter is clearly the earliest Christian festival. In Easter we celebrate man become God [...] that in the death and resurrection of Christ God has broken the stranglehold of human selfishness, has proved the enduring and conquering strength of divine love.
- **5).Easter Meals**: Easter is linked to the Passover and Exodus from Egypt recorded in the Old Testament through the Last Supper and crucifixion that preceded the resurrection. Jesus gave the Passover meal a new meaning, as he prepared himself and his disciples for his death in the upper room during the Last Supper. He identified the loaf of bread and cup of wine as his body soon to be sacrificed and his blood soon to be shed.
- **6).Hope of Glory**: Christ's resurrection has been at the heart of the church's message from the Day of Pentecost to the present. 1). By rising from the dead, Jesus Christ demonstrated that He had cleansed the guilt of our past and is able to help us in our present lives. 2). His resurrection assures us that our future is safe and secure. 3). Without Christ's resurrection we would have no salvation from sin, and no hope for our own future resurrection. 4). It guarantees the future resurrection of believers. 5). The resurrection of Christ also provides believers with spiritual power today. 6). The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is evidence that God will one day judge the world in righteousness.

The Easter Festival

- **Equinoxes Celebrations**: Since pre-historic times, people have celebrated the Equinoxes (Day and Night are equal) and the Solstices (It is the time when the sun reaches its highest or lowest point at noon) as sacred times.
- **Movable Feast**: Easter is associated with the Jewish Passover (Mat 26:2). Some Christians chose to celebrate the it on 14th of Nissan with Passover, others preferred it on the resurrected day of Sunday. In 325AD the Council of Nicaea, said that Easter should fall on Sunday following the first full moon after the Spring Equinox. Hence Easter always falls on a Sunday between March 22 – April 25.
- **Easter**: The English word Easter expounded by the English monk Bede in 731 AD. He derived it from Eostre, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring and fertility, but she was erased from history when they merged her legend with the resurrection of Christ after converting to Christianity. Bede was so influential for later Christians that the name stuck, and hence Easter remains the name by which the English, Germans and Americans.
- **In-culturation**: Eostre has been associated with fertility, spring, flowers, and the season after a barren winter. Christians borrowed a great deal of the eggs collecting, Bunny traditions, Baskets and Rabbits from Eostre. Her connections with symbols such as new life, which can easily be tied into the Easter story of Christ's resurrection granting us rebirth and new life in him (2 Cor 5:17).

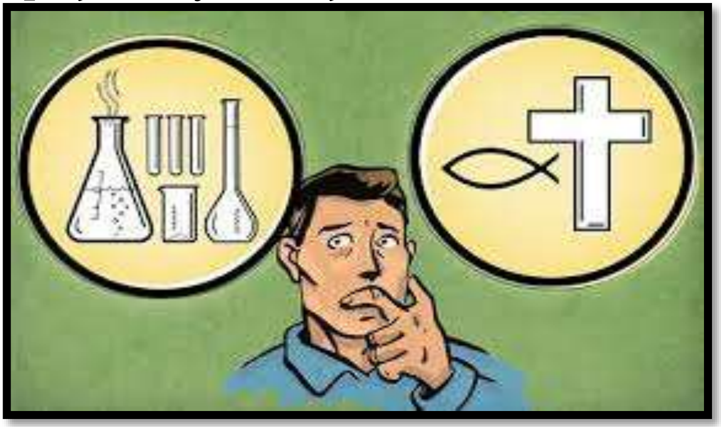
The Assentation of Jesus

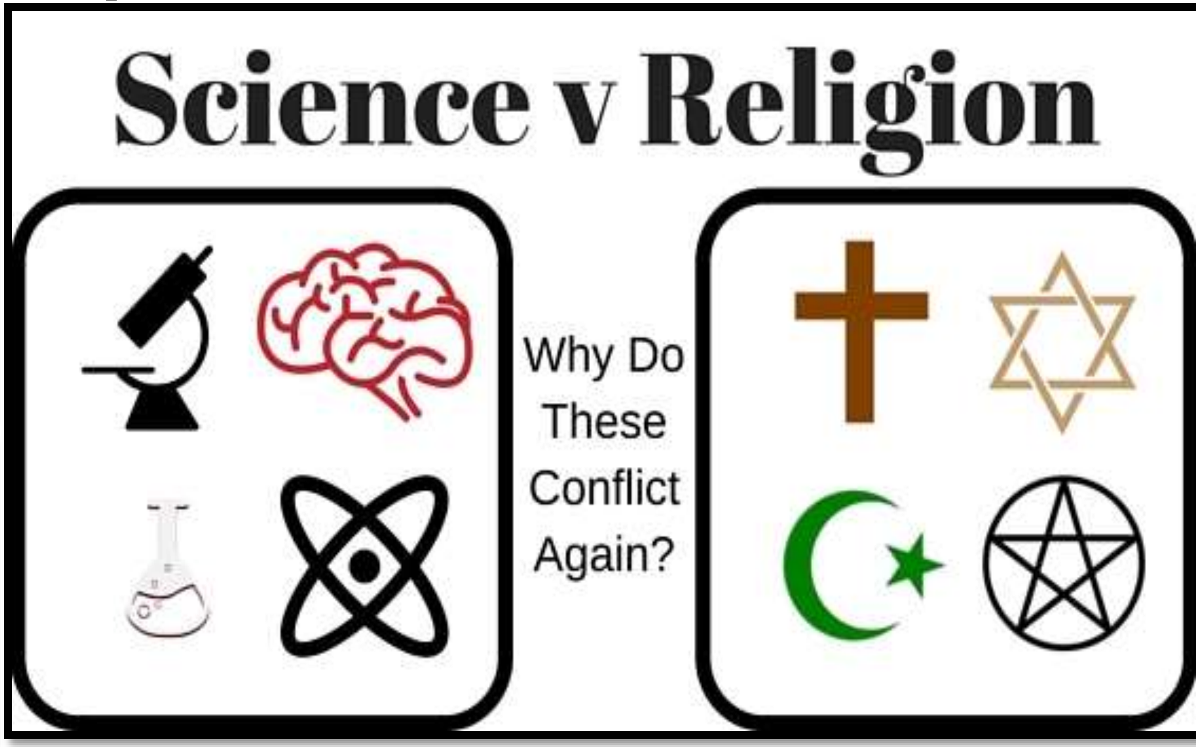
- **Etymology**: The ascension of Jesus is the Christian teaching that Christ physically departed from Earth by rising into Heaven, in the presence of eleven of his apostles. Jesus presented himself alive to the disciples appearing to them during 40 days and speaking about the Kingdom of God. But after the ascension, they worshiped Him (Acts 1:3,9, Lk 24:52,53).
- **Significance**: God exalted Jesus after his death, raising him from the dead and taking him to Heaven, where Jesus took his seat at the right hand of God (Ps 110:1). The Ascension was commemorated as a part of the celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The ascension also foreshadowed the final event in salvation history: Jesus' personal, physical, glorious return (Acts 1:11, I Thes 4:16,17).
- **Ascension Feast**: It is a major feast day of the Christian liturgical year, along with the Passion, Easter, Pentecost, and Christmas. The Roman Catholic, Orthodox Anglican and many Churches has celebrating on the on the sixth Thursday after Easter Sunday.
- **Ascension Arts**: In Christian art, the ascending Jesus is often shown blessing gesture by Christ with his right hand is directed towards the earthly group below him and signifies that he is blessing the entire Church. In the left hand, he may be holding a Gospel or a scroll, signifying teaching and preaching.

Is the Ascension of Jesus a Fact or Fiction?

- **1).Fact or Fiction**: Many people, nowadays, even within the church, deny the historicity of the ascension. They claim that the literal ascension narrative is conditioned by its time and culture. Modern cosmology had done away with the possibility that heaven is up and hell is down. Modern person thinking that if you rise up off the Earth (as in the ascension), you don't go to heaven. You go into orbit. We have different understanding of the universe, view of science, technology and space.

- **2). Apologetics**: Our Lord, a being still in some mode, though not our mode, corporeal, withdrew at His own will from the Nature presented by our three dimensions and five senses, not necessarily into the non-sensuous and un-dimensioned but possibly into, or through, a world of super-sense and super-space. So it may have been that Jesus, still in bodily form, chose to ascend not to the stars, but simply from the ground as the beginning of the super-physical journey to heaven. Miracles are possible.

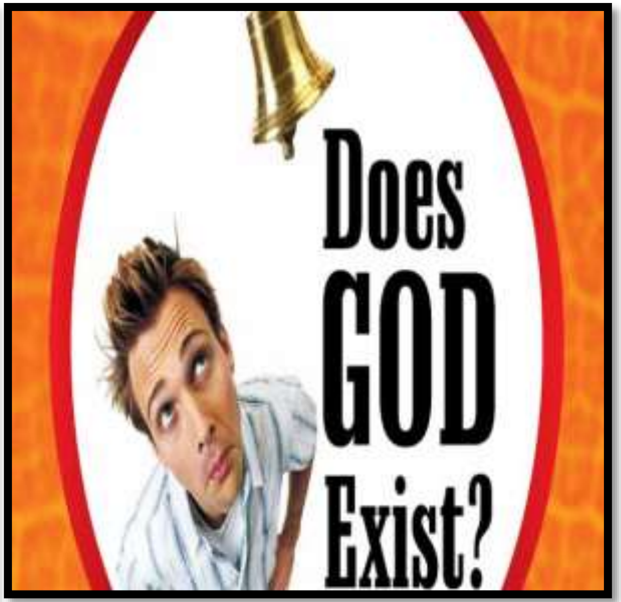




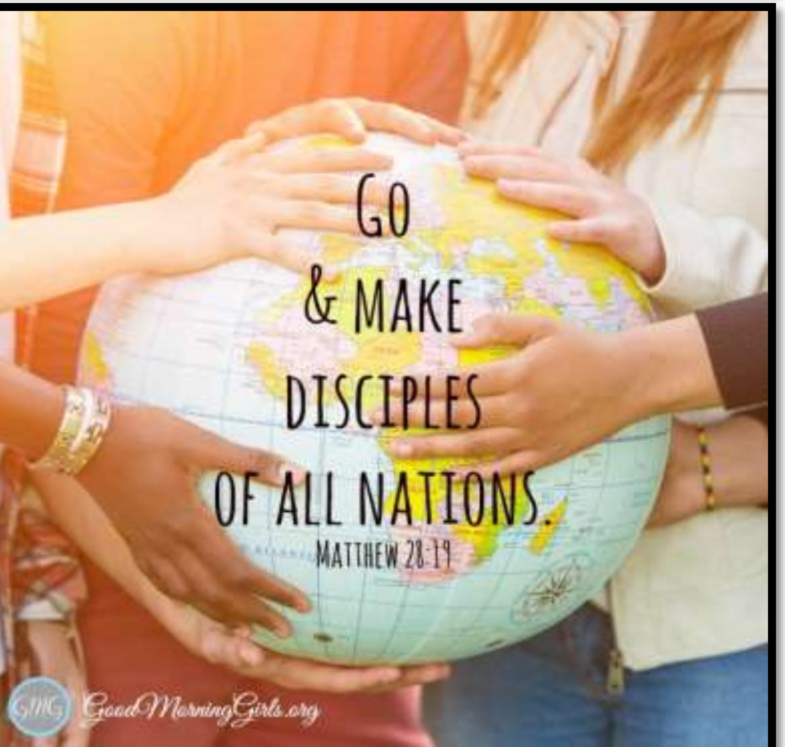
Is the Ascension of Jesus a Fact or Fiction?

3).Miracles: Miracles are by definition supernatural events; and science only examines natural phenomena. To make a definitive claim about whether miracles can occur, one must look beyond microscopes (Science). We modern people thinking that a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature. The assumption is that God, if he existed, would have no right to create a supernatural effect in the natural world God is the First Cause of all physical reality. This means he is the creator and sustainer of the natural laws and the things they govern. He is the supreme Lawmaker. It is absurd to charge him, then, with breaking his own "laws" since he is under no moral nor logical obligation to cause effects only via the normal physical causal relationships he himself upholds.

4).Conclusion: Our Lord's incarnation, His crucifixion and resurrection is meaningless without His ascension! The church does not proclaim a myth but a historical event. And she does not only confess the historical Jesus but the reality of His presence today. Ascension is a comforting and challenging truth. Jesus ascended into heaven, therefore, he withdrew his bodily presence from our sight, not to cease to be present with believers still on their earthly pilgrimage, but to rule heaven and earth with more immediate power…As his body was raised up above the heavens, so his power and energy were diffused and spread beyond all the bounds of heaven and earth.



The Great Commission



- **Great Commission**: Jesus gave this command to the apostles shortly before He ascended into heaven. He calls on his followers to make disciples of and baptize all nations in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Mat 28:16-20 Mk 16:14–18, Lk 24:44–49, Acts 1:4–8, and Jn 20:19–23). It is the foundation for evangelism and cross-cultural missions work.
- **A Personal Calling**: The Great Commission, is used to spread the Christian message and converting others to Christianity. First, it's the last recorded personal instruction given by Jesus to His disciples. Second, it's a special calling from Jesus Christ to all His followers to take specific action while on this earth.
- **Make Disciples**: It means to teach or train people to follow and obey Christ. "Going," "baptizing," and "teaching" are the means by which we fulfill the command to "make disciples".
- **We are His Witnesses**: According to Acts 1:8, we are to be Christ's witnesses, fulfilling the Great Commission in our cities (Jerusalem), in our states and countries (Judea and Samaria), and anywhere else God sends us (to the ends of the earth) at which time the end will come. There are only three kinds of Christians when it comes to world missions: zealous goers, zealous senders, and disobedient." Which group are you in?.

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THE END.

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God Bless You to Bless Others…